How to tell if your website needs a
Redesign or Recharge?

THE
walsh
GROUP

Step 1: Determine Whether a Website Revamp is Right for You

Make sure you are redesigning your website for the right reasons. First, realize that website redesign is a continuous process, and second, it's just as much about f**unctionality** as it is design. Start by setting your website goals.

Wrong Reasons For Redesign	Right Reasons for Redesign
"We have a new corporate look and feel."	"Want to get found by more prospects."
"It's been 12 months since our last redesign."	"Want to convert more prospects into leads and eventually, customers."
"The CEO wants to do it." The excitement you and your CEO will have from a complete renovation of your website will be short lived.	"We want to improve branding." (Only appropriate if oriented around one of the previous reasons.)

Set goals:

Misguided reasons for redesigning your website are driven by the thought that the freshness and "wow factor" of a new website will increase excitement over your brand. The main motivations behind website renovations should be to **improve the performance** of your website. This can be measured. Make sure goals are set, they are attainable, easily measured and someone is assigned to report on the measurements. A beautiful website, although intriguing and aesthetically pleasing, is secondary to a functional traffic and lead generating website.

Grow LEADS
Set GOALS

Step 2: Don't throw the baby out with the bath water

You can cause more damage than good by trying to undertake a website revamp without looking at your analytics. The importance of existing assets on your site should be preserved and protected. Know what is working and what isn't. Don't throw the baby out with the bath water.

What to look at:

- Website assets such as content, inbound links, keyword rankings, and conversion tools are critical to a strong web presence.
- You need to know how to preserve these assets to insure that they are all transferred in the redesign process.

The Asset Check List

- ☐ Determine how many pages you have.
- ☐ Figure out which pages are most popular/powerful.
- ☐ Determine how many inbound links you have.
- ☐ Establish where these links are coming from.
- ☐ Figure out which inbound links are most popular/powerful.
- ☐ Determine what keywords you rank highest before the move.
- ☐ Figure out which keywords are most effective. You may rank higher for certain keywords, but check to see if they have been clicked on and if so, how long the visitor stays. This determines their effectiveness.

Keywords are an important part of Search Engine Optimization (SEO), along with page titles, page names (URLs), and headlines that already exist on your site. If you do not fully understand the importance and practice of proper SEO, doing a web design can be more damaging than helpful. If you do not feel comfortable around SEO work, it may be best to hire a specialist to perform the redesign so all the hard work you have put into making a web presence does not disappear. It may also be time to contact a professional to set you up with a system that can track these metrics if you don't already have a system in place.
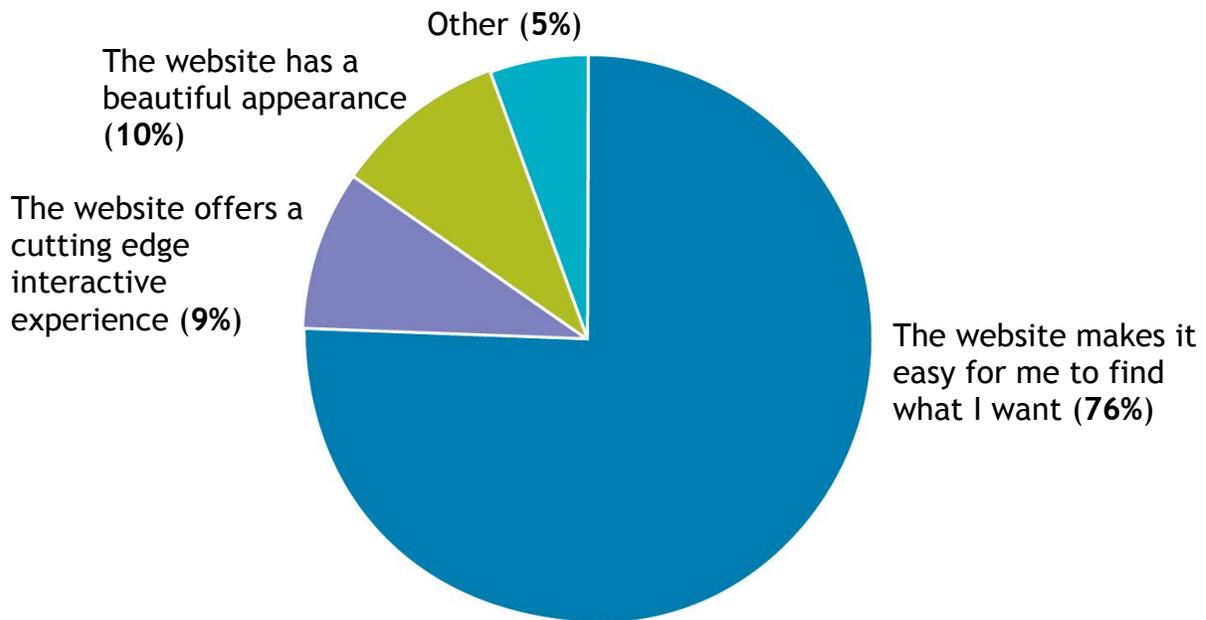
Step 3: Simplify your Homepage – the "Welcome Mat" into your site

If you want an interactive and flashy homepage that will entice your user, it is important to establish a few fundamentals first:

- The first impression is all about <u>simplicity.</u>
- 75% of Internet users never scroll past the first page of search results. (This is why SEO is important). *From marketshare.hitslink.com*
- Visitors want a website that makes it easy to find what they want.
- Highlight your blog on the home page.
- Set up a 301 redirect, for SEO's sake! (Your web programmer should advise you)
- Have a permanent redirect.
- Limit the amount of choices the user must make.
  o If you offer 25 services, put those 25 under 4 overarching umbrella services.
- Links to social networking pages are a must on your home page.

What is the most important factor in the design of a website?

Other (**5%**)

The website has a beautiful appearance (**10%**)

The website offers a cutting edge interactive experience (**9%**)

The website makes it easy for me to find what I want (**76%**)

Source: HubSpot - The Science of Website Redesign, June 2011

## In conclusion, your home page is the face of your services or products.

You only get one chance to impress that visitor, so make sure you carefully place the essentials you want them to know on your home page. It should also act as a launching platform to places where they can contact you in the future (i.e. blog, social media, etc.)

## Step 4: Recharge by keeping content fresh

It is important to understand that original content is what will generate traffic. Content creation is a continuous process.

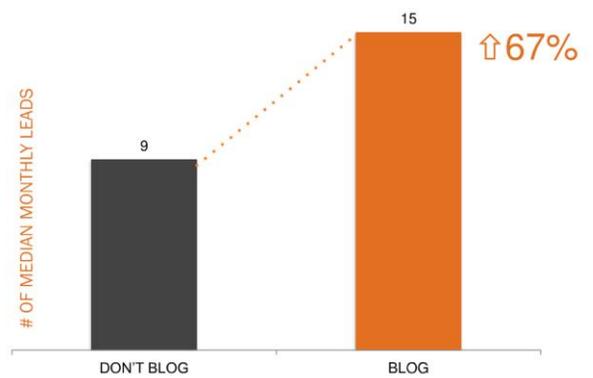### Some key concepts and statistics about content:

- Blogging results in a 55% increase in website visitors
- Blogging results in 67% more leads per month
- Search engines like fresh content, which will increase your number of indexed pages.
- People like fresh content *(according to a Hubspot report on Inbound Marketing Lead Generation)*
    - Companies that blog have 2x as many Twitter followers than those that don't
    - Companies that blog have 97% more inbound links than those that don't
- Original Content Vehicles:
    - Your blog
    - Podcasts
    - Presentations (Slideshare)
    - News Releases
    - Video content (YouTube Channel)
    - Photos (Flickr)
    - Offer eBooks or Whitepapers (via landing page – see Step 5)
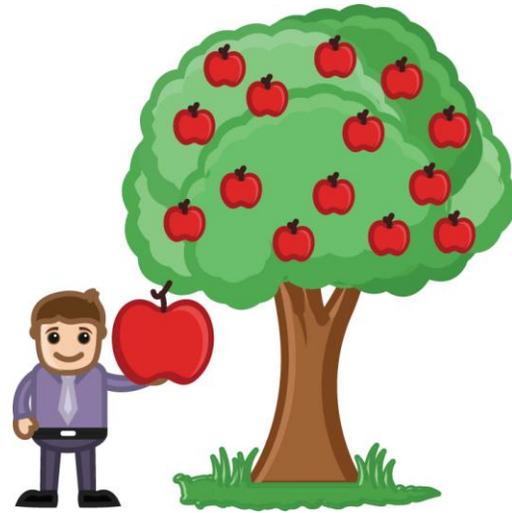
Companies that blog have
55% more
website visitors.

2250

⇧55%

1480

OF MONTHLY VISITORS

DON'T BLOG   BLOG
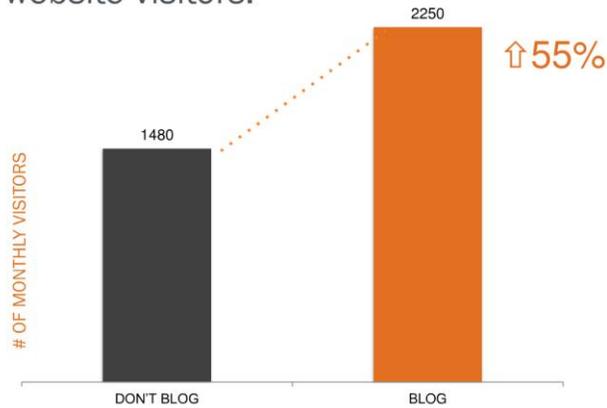
B2B companies that blog generate
67% more leads
per month than those who do not.

15

⇧67%

9

OF MEDIAN MONTHLY LEADS

DON'T BLOG   BLOG

Source: HubSpot, 100 Awesome Marketing Stats

Blogging is the easiest way to keep content fresh

Original content is your website's messenger; it will inform your prospects on what you do, and how passionately you do it. You should always be continuously contributing original content to keep your prospects engaged and constantly interacting with your website because a blog is easy to edit, update and it doesn't require knowledge of html programming. There is no excuse.

Step 5: Landing Pages – how and why

Many of you may not understand the importance of a landing page. This is where you see the real results of your website redesign. First, you need to understand what a "Landing Page" is.

In the transition to Web 2.0, the biggest advantage we saw was the interactive ability of your website. You now offer your customer or prospect "something to download" in exchange for their email address. Web 2.0 engages the visitor through the "Landing Page." Here are a few tips and tricks:

- Leave out any site navigation – you want your visitor to focus on the offer

- Keep the description of the offer clear, simple, and concise.
    - Hubspot research discovered that one company had a 32% conversion rate with a long descriptive copy and form field
    - When they cut it down, it improved their conversion rate to 53%

- Keep the form above the fold

- To maximize the efficiency of adding offers (with landing pages), consider these questions:

    - How fast can you create and launch a landing page?

    - Can one person do it in 30 minutes?

    - What is the cost of experimentation with different offers?

    - Can you measure it?

This is an example: it was an offer placed on our home page (www.thewalshgroup.com) for a year with little effectiveness. Using Hubspot software, in 20 minutes we created and re-launched this page and saw instant results.

Landing pages are where the magic happens

They are the gateway to your conversion offers that create engaged and interested leads. Make sure you can grab their attention with an interesting offer, but also coherently explain what you are offering through the landing page!

Step 6: But do landing pages work?

Since a majority of you probably do not have a system in place that tracks landing page conversion performance, you may be thinking, so how is this going to help me?

First, you have to buy into the concept of landing pages:

Think about what you offer now that could be offered on a landing page?
- What could help educate your prospects on the buying process?
- They should be living, breathing documents that are constantly changing.
- If your landing pages and offerings do not seem to be reaching their full potential, you should try to:
   - Attach their links in your email newsletters.
   - Have your "pay-per click ads" go directly to a specific landing page.
   - Use them as the next step after a trade show or event.

Website design is not a one and done deal.

Your web pages should evolve and improve over time. This is especially important for your landing pages since they help you to engage with your website visitors and convert them into raging fans of your business. Plus, you'll have the opportunity to engage them because of the information you have collected about them.

Step 7: Measure, measure, measure

Everybody has an opinion of what works in marketing... but getting agreement is the tricky part. Why? Because if you don't have good measurements, you're just guessing.

Key Concepts and Statistics

- Avoid "paralysis by analysis."
- Do not concern yourself with metrics that track the technical performance of your website.
- Focus on these three metrics:
  - Visitors.
    - How many people are coming to my website?
    - Where are they coming from?
  - Leads.
    - How many visitors converted to leads?
    - What did they convert on?
  - Sales.
    - How many leads converted to sales?
    - What keywords did they use to find you?
- These metrics will help you determine what parts of your website need revision.
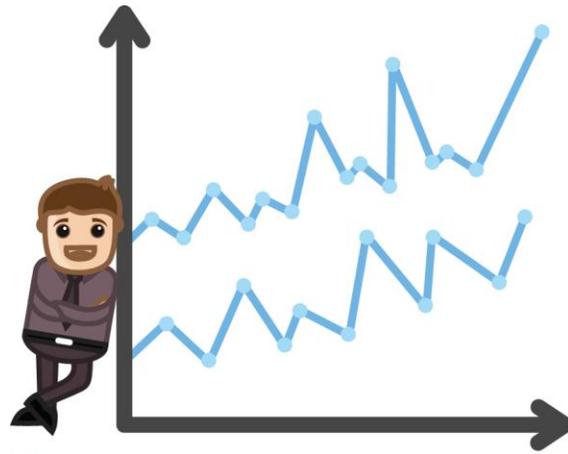
Metrics are pivotal for pinpointing the exact pain points of your website. By doing small, but constant adjustments to your website, you will be able to maximize the utility of your website so it becomes a platform for generating visitors, leads, and ultimately, sales.

To sum things up:

1. Start with defining your website redesign goals.
   a. Remember that most companies don't need a new website, but rather need better tools on their existing site.
2. Protect your assets during the design process so you do not damage your website presence.
3. Make a great first impression by focusing on the functionality of your homepage.
4. Creative and original content is the most powerful way of attracting and retaining website visitors.
5. Design compelling landing pages so visitors will be more willing to give away their contact information for your content offerings.
6. Make constant adjustments to landing pages by experimenting with their layout and formatting.
7. Set up a system to measure the metrics of your website so you can reproduce successful campaigns, and scrap failing ones.

Something to think about...

Redesign projects can be laborious, so most companies are better suited at trying to get more out of what they already have. Inbound marketing tactics such as SEO, blogging, and social media are easy to include in your existing site, and are twice as effective as traditional web redesign elements. You should strive to make small, but constant and continuous improvements to each element of your current website so your website becomes a powerful traffic-generating machine.

We provide a no obligation assessment of your website. Please contact The Walsh Group:
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